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FROM THE DIRECTOR'S OFFICE

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A Greater Role for the Joint Council

Prior to his first meeting with the Joint Council on Food and Agricultural Sciences on July 17, Secretary Block asked the Council to respond to a set of 16 questions covering a broad range of organizational and policy issues.

In the text of one of the questions, the Secretary stated: "I look forward to using the Joint Council as an important advisory body and sounding board . . . the dialogue we are establishing at this meeting is an important beginning to that process." In the past, the Joint Council's recommendations have been mostly in the form of reports. Following the Secretary's initiative, we now expect a much more active and communicative relationship among the Council, the Secretary, and the vast community of people and institutions concerned with food and agricultural sciences in the United States. (Note: If you wish to obtain a copy of the Secretary's 16 questions and the Joint Council's answers, write to Susan Schram, Executive Secretary, Joint Planning and Evaluation Office of Deputy Director, USDA-SEA-JPE, Rm. 351-A, Administration Bldg., 14th and Independence Ave., SW, Washington, DC 20250)

The Joint Council is made up of representatives of land-grant colleges and universities, State experiment stations and extension services, the Office of Science and Technology Policy, various USDA agencies, producers, and the public. Its purpose is to foster coordination and planning in public and private research, extension, and teaching activities in the food and agricultural sciences.

A number of top department officials met with the Council during the July meeting; as did the chairpersons of the Extension, Experiment Station, and Resident Instruction Committees on Organization and Policy.

This was the first Joint Council meeting for James H. Anderson, dean of the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources at Michigan State University, the new co-chair (with me) of the Joint Council.

Research and Education Needs

Over the past couple of weeks, the administrators of Science and Education agencies, members of my staff, and I have been holding a series of meetings with the under and deputy secretaries and administrators of agencies reporting to them. The purpose is to discuss research and education needs and priorities -- as well as our current programs and capabilities -- prior to our presentation of the 1983 Science and Education budget to the Secretary on August 6.



### Secretary Establishes New Council in USDA

To strengthen department efforts toward good communication among agencies and to provide a common direction in dealing with issues and an effective means of developing policy, Secretary Block has established a Policy and Coordination Council in USDA.

The Council includes the Secretary, the Deputy Secretary, all Under and Assistant Secretaries, the Director of Science and Education, the General Counsel, and the Inspector General.

The Secretary believes in strong and effective interagency coordination and cooperation. He has asked each council member to organize and chair a committee to deal with issues which fall primarily in his or her area, but need interagency coordination.

The committee chairs will set up working groups to coordinate efforts on specific issues. The committees also will select issues to present to the Council for resolution.

The new council structure in USDA mirrors a network of cabinet level councils, one of which is chaired by Secretary Block.

The Secretary has stressed that good input from the local level on up is essential to the success of this process in carrying out Administration and USDA policies and programs.

### Coordination and Organization Matters

We have a number of cross-cutting issues to be addressed in the near future if we are to represent adequately the food and agriculture science and education system. For example, the S&E coordinating group headed by Ernest Corley has been assigned the job of assisting me in setting up the Interagency Research and Education Committee established by the Secretary, and described above. We will be developing options to best accommodate the two main purposes of the Committee -- interagency coordination and the identification of issues to be raised before the Secretary's Policy and Coordination Council.

Dr. Corley's group will also be preparing a staff paper on strategic and long-range planning for use in upcoming hearings on that topic being chaired by Congressman George Brown (D-Calif.).

The new information staff alignments are already in place. Our major goals have been to keep essential functions together and avoid the need for duplicate staffing in the S&E agencies. To that end, the Agricultural Research Service will handle media services, research reporting, and technical publications for the four S&E agencies. Similarly, the Extension Service will handle all popular publications work as well as printing and distribution services for the four agencies. The S&E Information Staff, headed by Alice Skelsey, will continue to coordinate information services for the Director as well as provide direct information support to this office.



We see no interruption in services with this arrangement. For example, the unprecedented efforts already underway in cooperative publications should continue apace. Some 40 publications are now being prepared jointly by Federal and State personnel all across the country in the areas of weed science and plant disease. Twenty other subject matter areas have been identified for similar cooperative efforts in order to make the combined expertise of Federal and State researchers and State extension specialists available in the preparation of publications for the public nationwide. The Experiment Station and Extension Directors have been highly supportive in responding to our requests for participation by State personnel. I am confident that these cooperative efforts will be maintained through the Extension Service, not only to increase the usefulness of our publications to meet the needs of farmers, ranchers and the general public but also to decrease costs to both Federal and State governments.

Programs that have been operating out of the Special Programs Office will be reassigned to the Agricultural Research Service, Cooperative State Research Service, and the Extension Service. Bille Hougart will represent the Director's office in a coordinating role. We expect that these special programs -- such as energy, IPM, international programs -- will be carried out in a fully efficient manner. We will be announcing the specific assignments shortly.

#### Fish Stories

This time the big one didn't get away.

In fact, we recently got two "big ones" -- each 24 inches long and weighing about 10 pounds -- at the Arboretum, and more will soon be on the way.

Japan and the Zen Nippon Aikin Kai Club of southern California, a group of Koi fanciers, sent two Nishiki Koi fish, an exotic form of carp, to Washington as a gift to the United States last month. About 20 more fish will be arriving later this summer.

Japanese Ambassador Yoshio Okawara presented the rare Japanese ornamental fish to the United States at a ceremony at the Arboretum on July 9. Secretary Block accepted the gift on behalf of the President and the people of the United States. H. Marc Cathey, Arboretum director, coordinated the ceremony. The Ambassador and Mrs. Okawara and guests from the White House staff also visited the Bonsai collection at the Arboretum after the ceremony.

In another fish story, Bille Hougart, USDA's aquaculture coordinator, was in Mississippi to help producers of the "Universe" television show put together a program on fish farming. "Universe," a science program hosted by Walter Cronkite, is on CBS-TV Tuesdays at 8 p.m. The aquaculture program, filmed in the People's Republic of China and the United States, will be aired the third or fourth week of August.

#### DOE Outlines New Energy Policy

In July, the Department of Energy released the National Energy Policy Plan, entitled "Securing America's Energy Future." The plan outlines the Administration's energy policy and covers energy production, conservation, security, regulations and projections.



According to Energy Secretary Edwards, "the policy is aimed at unburdening years of regulating market performance to allow a shift to reliance on the free market systems."

Last year, USDA received approximately \$7.5 million in pass-through funding from DOE for energy research and conservation projects. Although the report does not detail any specific areas where funding might be cut or extended, it states that "public spending is appropriate (and will continue) in long-term research with high risks, but potentially high payoffs. In most cases, however, using public funds to subsidize either domestic energy production or conservation buys little additional security and only diverts capital, workers, and initiative from uses that contribute more to society and the economy."

Copies of the plan and the supplements -- "Energy Projections to the Year 2000," "Interrelationships of Energy and the Economy," and "Environmental Trends to the Year 2000" -- can be obtained from the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402.

#### Keyworth's Speech Available

We've had several inquiries about the speech George A. Keyworth II, director-designate, Office of Science and Technology Policy, made at the Sixth Annual AAAS Colloquium on R&D in June, and mentioned in my last newsletter.

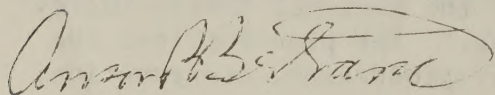
If you would like a copy of Dr. Keyworth's remarks, which reflect his views on science policy, write to Science and Education Information Staff, Room 436-A, USDA, Washington, D.C. 20250.

#### Technology Transfer Hearings

Members of the Subcommittees on Science, Research, and Technology of the U. S. House of Representatives' Committee on Science and Technology, complimented us on the testimony we presented July 16 at oversight hearings on the Technology Innovation Act of 1980.

We stated that: "Technology transfer is necessary, but it only the first step leading to industrial innovation and increased productivity. Good research is of little value if the results cannot be translated into necessary useable goods and services.

"It is the Department's position that technology transfer in agriculture has been effective and will continue to be effective. By focusing on the use of the latest technology of electronic communications and other conventional techniques, including the possible location by region of extension specialists, our ability to maintain a flow of information to both our traditional and new clients will be improved."



ANSON R. BERTRAND  
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